

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of claims:

1. (Canceled)
2. (Currently amended) A connecting piece according to claim [[1]] 11, wherein the gripping element comprises six straight portions.
3. (Canceled)
4. (Currently amended) A connecting piece according to claim [[3]] 11, wherein the outer surface of the metal insert is provided with ribs extending outward from the metal insert, the ribs of the metal insert being aligned with the ribs of the gripping element.
5. (Currently amended) A connecting piece according to claim [[1]] 11, wherein the connecting piece further comprises a smooth portion disposed between adjacent straight portions, and the smooth portion ~~which is arranged smooth~~ is a rounded portion.
6. (Canceled)
7. (Currently amended) A connecting piece according to claim [[6]] 12, wherein the gripping element comprises six straight portions.
8. (Cancelled)

9. (Currently amended) A connecting piece according to claim [[6]] 12, wherein the connecting piece further comprises a smooth portion disposed between adjacent straight portions, and the smooth portion ~~which is arranged smooth~~ is a rounded portion.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently amended) A connecting piece, intended for connecting at least two elements, a first element connected to a first end of the connecting piece and a second element connected to a second end of the connecting piece, the connecting piece comprising:

a body mainly of plastic;

a metal insert positioned at at least one end of the connecting piece, the metal insert provided with a thread, the metal insert configured such that at least one of the first and second elements can be connected to the connecting piece by a threaded connection; and

at least one gripping element disposed around the outer surface of the connecting piece manipulatable for allowing either the connecting piece to rotate relative to at least one of the first and second elements or at least one of the first and second elements to rotate relative to the connecting piece while making a threaded connection, the gripping element comprising:

at least two straight portions arranged such that the two straight portions on opposite sides of the connecting piece are parallel, the straight portions forming gripping surfaces for a tool;

the gripping element being formed of two or more ribs disposed circumferentially around the connecting piece, each rib forming a continuous ring around the outer surface of the connecting piece;

whereby the gripping element is formed such that a tool surrounding the gripping element slips before at least one of the thread ~~and/or~~ and the basic structure of the connecting piece gets damaged.

12. (Currently amended) A connecting piece, intended for connecting at least two elements, a first element connected to a first end of the connecting piece and a second element connected to a second end of the connecting piece, the connecting piece comprising:

a body mainly of thermoplast;

a thread positioned at at least one end of the connecting piece, the thread configured such that at least one of the first and second elements can be connected to the connecting piece by a threaded connection; and

at least one gripping element disposed around the outer surface of the connecting piece manipulatable for allowing either the connecting piece to rotate relative to at least one of the first and second elements or at least one of the first and second elements to rotate relative to the connecting piece while making a threaded connection, the gripping element comprising:

at least two straight portions arranged such that the two straight portions on opposite sides of the connecting piece are parallel, the straight portions forming gripping surfaces for a tool;

the gripping element being formed of two or more ribs disposed circumferentially around the connecting piece, each rib protruding outwards from the outer surface of the connecting piece;

whereby the gripping element is formed such that a tool surrounding the gripping element slips before the thread of the connecting piece gets damaged.

13 (New). The connecting piece of claim 11 wherein the circumferential length of a smooth portions is about half as long as the circumferential length of an adjacent straight portion.

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14 (New) The connecting piece of claim 12 wherein the circumferential length of a smooth portions is about half as long as the circumferential length of an adjacent straight portion.